**COLLATED RESULTS FROM STAFF MTG 17TH MARCH 2010**

**PURPLE QUESTION: DOES OUR HEADSTART PROGRAM PREPARE VCE STUDENTS PROPERLY?**

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| * NO * Probably not – but depends on the quality of the material presented to some extent. * NO How about ensuring completion before starting anew? This is a bigger cultural issue. * NO Get rid of it, *except for VCE – 2 weeks at least* * I would say no (in competition with other schools). Sometimes we tend to “write off” the last few weeks of the school year. The kids lose focus. * Not a good idea other than for administrative stuff and pre-reading. Otherwise, need to finish the year – good break - start fresh * Currently NO – Headstart was fine – 2009 unsatisfactory * Useless for Yrs 7-10 * Students should be able to have a Christmas break guilt free without some pressure being put on them by some outdated education system. This doesn’t happen at uni. * At yr 11 it is really about text distribution and introductory activities which often have little bearing on assessment for yr 12. * Headstart does not assist VET & VCAL students as it as to all be redone again the next year to get the students tuned in & in may cases new students join the class so you have to do it again. * Not needed for yrs 7-10 * Students must be in correct classes – no changes * New Students disadvantaged * It impacts negatively on new students * Headstart doesn’t give all kids a headstart, often many join in the new year & miss Headstart week. * Great if you’re a current student – Students coming in are disadvantaged * What about those kids who enroll in Jan??? * Headstart can only be judged if the teacher will take the class the following year. * OK for VCE if class is set and with teacher taking course * Headstart does not assist VET & VCAL as it as to all be redone again the next year to get the students tuned in & in may cases new students join the class so you have to do it again. * Need to have the correct teacher teaching classes. * Headstart not relevant for Middle School * Not needed in the junior and middle years. * Headstart is good for VCE – Better for students in lower forms to continue as feedback on exams etc is needed – given tight teaching times | **Negative comments and problems with Headstart**  **&**  **Possible Improvements** |
| * It is not taken seriously by the students. Motivated students use it well * Other than reading the materials and basic knowledge of the subject – what is the value of Headstart? * It will depend on what you can complete over the time. Does it really advantage returning students? * I’m not sure Headstart is that valuable – does it really give out kids a Headstart? * Students would have one day per subject to get info * After school – teach them relationship building skills so they can cope in real life. * Do we know the scores of schools which have longer period? – If demonstrably greater than ours, maybe an issue, if not then!!! * A review of Headstart was completed at the end of 2009 with many +ve comments. Now 1 week, next 2 weeks, next 3 weeks etc etc etc….where does it stop? | **Ambivalent Statements & Questions about the value of Headstart** |
| * I can achieve the things I need to achieve to prep my Yr 11 & 12’s for the holiday break in 1 hour. The kids don’t feel like it’s the end of the year and so do I. * One lesson needed for VCE students before the holidays in Art & VCAD | **Headstart too long** |
| * Headstart needs to be longer at VCE level. All other year levels maybe not needed. * VCE needs 2 weeks at least * Obviously a longer Headstart program would be more beneficial, but probably 2 weeks max * No, 2 perhaps 3 lessons is not enough & generally we repeat the work because kids have had 2 months to forget what they did in 2 lessons * I think we need more of a Headstart program. One week is definitely not enough!! * One week seems too short for a reasonable Headstart program | **Headstart too Short** |
| * Headstart great/good for VCE * OK for VCE if class is set and with teacher taking course * I believe a headstart program is beneficial for both students and staff in the VCE years. * I see Headstart at VCE level is vital so that we can cover all the introductory work before the beginning of the year. It gives a prompt start once we return after the Jan holidays. * Yes – provides students with chance to “view” the next year’s work. Can’t forsee those away, new students or those who will later change. Longer period may not serve a useful purpose * Headstart is valuable for YR 12 students – unsure about the other yr levels. * I’d like yr 12 to proceed – unsure about the value at other levels. | **Positive Comments about Headstart** |

**SUMMARY**

* Quite a number of comments were against the continuation of the Headstart program. The reasons given were:
  + Not relevant for VET & VCAL
  + Students need a complete break ready to come back and start fresh
* However, *some* of these comments indicated a support for the continuation of Headstart at VCE level only
* A number of comments were strongly in favour of retaining Headstart for VCE
* It was clear that Headstart was not considered necessary for Years 7-10 (perhaps even Yr 11)
* Questions were posed as to the whether Headstart did give students a Headstart.
* A number thought one of the main problems was students who missed Headstart for whatever reason were seen to be disadvantaged
* The length of Headstart was quite polarizing. Some comments indicated a need to increase the length of the program, others wanted only one or two lessons.
* One point that was made a number of times was the need for the correct teacher to be taking the Headstart class for it to be valuable.

**SOME THOUGHTS**

* Retain Headstart for VCE only, or even just for Year 12 – but what do VET VCAL do?
* Ensure as far as possible correct teacher runs the class
* The aims of Headstart need to be clearly spelt out. Do we need to revisit what these are?

Are we:

* + Starting the next year’s course work?
  + Covering introductory work?
  + Just doing admin stuff?
  + Setting the ground rules?

It would seem different teachers are doing different things, hence the need for varying amounts of time. If the aims of the program were clarified, then the time needed may become clearer?

(If some teachers are starting the next yrs work, why is this? Is it because they do not have enough face to face time for yr 12 – another issue?)

* Some answers to the Headstart Question would have been from teachers with no real knowledge of the program for VCE
* We must bear in mind that the time for these Q was short – answers were off the cuff. Decisions about the program need to based on more than this.
* Where is the review that was done at the end of 2009 – it be beneficial to look at it before making any decision.